



Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

SECRET

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E.O. 120651 RDS-1 9/30/01 (MURPHY, RICHARD W.) OR-M
TAGS: MASS, US, SA
SUBJECT: U.S.-SAUDI AWACS CONSULTATIONS

REF: STATE 259840

1. (S-ENTIRE TEXT).

2. SUMMARY. CROWN PRINCE HAS RELAYED HIS DECISION, THROUGH BANDAR, TO GO WITH OPTION 1. HE HAS AGREED TO OUR USE OF LANGUAGE ON DATA SHARING, SECURITY, AND JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION WHICH WILL BE OF SOME USE IN REPACKAGING THIS OPTION. HIS REASON FOR REFUSING OTHER OPTIONS IS BASICALLY THAT THEY POSE UNACCEPTABLE RISKS IN LIGHT OF PUBLIC LEAKS OF RECENT WEEKS WHICH SUGGEST HE WOULD BE BENDING TO ISRAELI INSPIRED PRESSURE IN EFFORT TO SECURE AWACS. END SUMMARY.

3. HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM POST MIDNIGHT THREE HOUR DISCUSSION WITH BANDAR. ACCOMPANIED BY GENERAL SECORD, CHUSMTM AND DCM PLACKE, WE HEARD OUT HIS BLOW BY BLOW TWO HOUR DISCUSSION WITH CROWN PRINCE AND SUBSEQUENT SESSION WITH SULTAN. (AT 8 P.M. WE HAD BRIEFED BANDAR AT FAHD'S REQUEST ON OUR OPTIONS IN EXPECTATION WE WOULD BE FOLLOWING IN TO SEE FAHD AFTER BANDER'S INITIAL

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DISCUSSION WITH CROWN PRINCE. OUR OWN MEETING DID NOT TAKE PLACE BUT HAVE ASKED CROWN PRINCE TO RECEIVE SECORD AND MYSELF SOMETIME SEPTEMBER 30).

4. BANDAR WAS SURPRISED AND DISAPPOINTED THAT FAHD NOT INTERESTED IN OPTION 2. HE REPORTED NO REACTIONS FROM FAHD ON OPTIONS 3 OR 4 OR THE FALLBACK OPTION WHICH I HAD TOUCHED ON WITH BANDAR, WHO DISPLAYED NO INTEREST IN IT. ACCORDING TO BANDAR, FAHD HAS DECIDED TO PUT HIS CONFIDENCE IN ALL-OUT ADMINISTRATION EFFORT TO SUCCEED WITH OPTION ONE, (PRESENT SALES AGREEMENT) AND HAS AGREED TO PUBLIC USE OF LANGUAGE ELABORATING ON SECURITY PROCEDURES, DATA SHARING AND THE JOINT MILITARY COMMISSION, WHICH WE CAN USE TO REARTICULATE OPTION 1. (SEPTTEL).

5. FAHD NOTED THAT KINGDOM HAS LONG PERMITTED OUR MILITARY PRESENCE. THIS HAS BEEN TO POINT THERE IS INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF DE FACTO USG CONTROL OF CRUCIAL ELEMENTS OF SAUDI MILITARY STRUCTURE. HE IS PREPARED TO EXTEND THESE ARRANGEMENTS QUIETLY TO AIR DEFENSE PACKAGE. HOWEVER, INTENSE MEDIA AND CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN PACKAGE HAS CAST ISSUE INTO SAUDI-ISRAELI (OR FAHD-BEGIN) POPULARITY CONTEST IN U.S. IN THIS GAME, FAHD CONSIDERS HE CANNOT AFFORD TO BE SEEN TO BE COMPROMISING OR RETREATING. HE FURTHER CONSIDERS THAT LINE OF HOSTILE QUESTIONING OF ANY WORDING WE MIGHT COME UP WITH FOR OPTIONS (OTHER THAN OPTION 1) WOULD CREATE JUST THIS IMPRESSION. WITH GREATER ISSUES AT STAKE IN WHICH KINGDOM IS CURRENTLY INVOLVED, SUCH AS LEBANESE CPASEFIRE AND PEACE PROCESS INCLUDING ROLE OF PALESTINIANS THEREIN, NOT TO MENTION HIS CONCERN FOR OUR OVERALL BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP, FAHD DOES NOT CHOOSE TO

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TAKE THIS RISK.

6. SULTAN SIMPLY BACKED UP CROWN PRINCE'S POSITION IN BANDAR'S SUBSEQUENT MEETING. SULTAN PROMISED SIGN GENERAL SECURITY OF MILITARY INFORMATION AGREEMENT SOONEST.

7. BANDAR IS RETURNING TO US, PROBABLY ON OCTOBER 1, BEARING ABOVE MESSAGE FOR PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY. MURPHY

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